

# U2C2 Connection

A monthly newsletter published by the Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Sacramento  
December 2008

## *A Month of Sundays*

**Worship Services** [The 9:30 & 11:00 AM services are held every Sunday unless otherwise noted]

### **9:30 AM Meditative Services** [every Sunday]

The theme of our 9:30 contemplative services for the month of December will be "Darkness and Light" and the winter holidays that celebrate them.

### **11:00 AM Traditional Services**

*Sunday, Dec. 7: "Keeping the Sabbath" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges*

As we get deeper into this season of hyper-activity, over-spending and obligations, Rev. Martha will help us take a step back and consider the need for regular rest, renewal and quiet reconnection with our spirits.

*Sunday, Dec. 14: "Advent: The Journey to Bethlehem" - Worship Leader: Allison Claire*

Allison Claire will discuss the Christian tradition of Advent as a time of preparation for personal and social transformation. We will take a fresh look at one of the world's great wisdom stories — the trek to Bethlehem — as we open our hearts to the gifts and challenges to come.

*Sunday, Dec: 21: "Holiday Intergenerational Service" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges*

Join us for our Holiday Intergenerational Service. Our children will treat us to a memorable Christmas pageant as we enjoy being together.

*Wednesday, Dec: 24: "Early Christmas Eve Service at 7:15 PM" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges*

Rev. Martha will lead us in a joyful celebration for the entire family and our Children's Choir will help us enjoy traditional carols. Join us for music, stories and the traditional candle-lit singing of "Silent Night."

(Note: Be sure to be there for holiday refreshments and conversation in between our two Christmas Eve services. We will eat, drink and be merry all together from 8:15 PM to 9:00 PM!)

*Wednesday, Dec: 24: "Late Christmas Eve Service at 9:00 PM" - Worship Leader: Rev. Martha Hodges*

This traditional Christmas Eve service will feature readings from the Christmas story, carol singing and other music, and of course, candles! Join us for this reminder of what the Christmas holiday is all about.

*Sunday, Dec. 28: "Ring in the New" - Worship Leader: Lucy Bunch*

As we prepare for the start of the new year, like the Roman God Janus, we will pause to look backward and forward. Join worship leaders Lucy Bunch and Karen Gunderson for a service of reflection and inspiration.

## *A Month of Sundays*

Worship Services **p. 1**

## *December Planner 2008*

Events & Schedule **p. 2**

## *Grace Notes*

Bah Humbug? **p. 3**

## *Growing Together*

To Our New Members **p. 4**

## *DRE News*

This Month's RE Schedule **p. 5**

Christmas Choir **p. 5**

Our Whole Lives **p. 5**

Christmas Pageant **p. 5**

Last Harry Potter Book Club Meeting **p. 5**

## *RE Committee News*

Happenings in RE **p. 5**

## *Helping Hands*

Another Successful Action Auction **p. 6**

Share the Plate **p. 7**

Grow Our Spirit **p. 7**

## *Ongoing Activities*

Daytimers Group **p. 7**

Saturday Supper **p. 7**

Theatre Group **p. 7**

Women's Group **p. 7**

Men's Group **p. 7**

## *Special Events*

Guest at Your Table **p. 8**

Christmas is Coming! **p. 8**

## *Other Items of Interest*

Old Friends in New Places **p. 8**

Remembering Viola Liuzzo &

James Reeb **p. 8**

SSIP Needs UCC Rep **p. 8**

Did You Know? **p. 8**

## *About Us*

Mission **p. 9**

Membership **p. 9**


Affiliates **p. 9**

Contacts **p. 9**



# December Planner 2008

If you have a meeting or event this month and don't see it listed, please contact the office at 689-2008 or [uucc@cwnet.com](mailto:uucc@cwnet.com).

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Daytimers 10am at church	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Sat Supper offsite
<b>7</b> Sunday Worship 9:30 & 11:00am Newcomer Welcome after the 11am service	<b>8</b> Membership Committee Mtg 7-9pm	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Daytimers 10am at church	<b>12</b> Theatre Group 8pm	<b>13</b> Men's Group 9am
<b>14</b> Sunday Worship 9:30 & 11:00am UU Cafe after church Harry Potter Game & Talk Time after church	<b>15</b> Newsletter Deadline	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> Daytimers 10am at church Board Mtg 7:15pm	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> Sunday Worship 9:30 & 11:00am (Special Holiday Intergenerational Service @ 11am) FinanceMtg 12pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> Early Xmas Eve Service @ 7:15pm (Holiday Social Hour between services from 8:15-9:00pm) Late Xmas Eve Service @ 9:00pm	<b>25</b> Christmas 	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> Sunday Worship 9:30 & 11:00am	<b>29</b> Church Ops Mtg 7pm at church	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>			

\*AAE indicates an Action Auction Event.

## Worship Support Schedule

Altar	Greeter	Lighter	Usher
12/7 Beverly Boido	Becca Sanders	Zachary N.	Karen Gunderson
12/14 Edie O'Laughlin	Becca Sanders	Cheyenne B.	Karen Gunderson
12/21 Georgene Tarble	Becca Sanders	Elaine C.	Karen Gunderson
12/28 Jenn Richard	Becca Sanders	Alex R.	Karen Gunderson

# Grace Notes

by Rev. Martha Hodges,  
Minister



## Bah Humbug?

I love Christmas. Even more than that, I love Christmas Eve...The sense of anticipation, the hope, perhaps even the belief, that something wonderful is about to happen.

The Christians among us celebrate the birth of a great spiritual leader who proclaimed the redeeming power of love to rich and poor, saintly and sinful. He proclaimed that the Kingdom of God – the possibility of a world ruled by peace, justice and love — was already here in our hearts.

The Jews, the Buddhists and Pagans, the Humanists and Atheists among us may need to work a little harder to find the meaning of Christmas. And Christian or not, too many of us dread this holiday – the shopping frenzy, the fussy children, the umpteenth broadcast of “It’s a Wonderful Life,” the forced gaiety, the purchase of presents we cannot afford. Why bother trying to find some meaning in this holiday? Why not just grit our teeth and wait for it to be over, as so many seem to do?

I’ve actually done that a few times in my life. One year I even went to Hawaii, hoping that the land of hula and tropical beaches would distract me from my emptiness. It didn’t feel good. I knew I was missing something, denying myself an opportunity to connect with some deep feeling of reverence and awe that was trying to make itself felt inside me. Reverence for what? Awe engendered by what? As Unitarians (non-Trinitarians) what can the birth of Jesus signify to us?



Christmas is a holiday about hope. It reminds us of what is best in ourselves: our yearning to be peaceful, loving, generous, forgiving people. It reminds us that we are not too cynical to believe that humanity, as long as it can connect to the innocent inner self that longs to do the right thing, may yet create a just and loving world. Christmas affirms that we are still open to the possibility of miracle and wonder and that blessings may yet come to all, deserving or not. Even to us, imperfect as we know ourselves to be. They may already be here. And Christmas reminds us to look for those blessings – the sacred — in unlikely places.

If the Divine were to enter your life, in what form would it appear? In the form of an infant? If we looked, would we see it shining through the hopes and fears that we read in each other’s faces? Would we see it in our own faces?

In this holiday season, may you find the sacred — the miracle that is hope, love, innocence and renewal — around you and within you. Amen.

# *Growing Together*



## **To Our New Members**

We joyfully welcome the following new members into our congregation: Cynthia Askew, Michelle Glover, Coleen Morris, Carol Byers, Terry De Crescenzo, June Gladney, Susan Lange, Stephan Lange, Rose Kohn, Will Kohn, Gayle Newman, Ken Newman, Annette Falcon and her daughter, Jane Thompson, and Anita Lee.

*We, the members of this congregation, welcome you into this liberal religious community. Your commitment gratifies us, your energies enliven us, and your presence renews us. May you find here a caring, supportive home that enriches your life. We ask you to help us make this a place that nourishes your spirit. We hereby welcome you on this, our shared journey, and pledge to live with you in loving fellowship.*

*Welcome!*

## This Month's RE Schedule

The December Religious Education Schedule is as follows:

### Little's

12/7/2008 - Instructor, Ernie Tomassilli - Potions, Experiments

12/14/2008 - Instructor, TBA - Prep for Xmas Pageant, Practice and Stained Glass Chalice Cookies

12/21/2008 - Instructor, TBA - Christmas Pageant, Winter Pageant

12/28/2008 - Instructor, Gayle - Herbology, Coloring with flower parts

### Middle's

12/7/2008 - Instructor, Becca Woods - Potions, Experiments

12/14/2008 - Instructor, TBA - Prep for Xmas Pageant, Practice and Stained Glass Chalice Cookies

## RE Committee

*News* from Annette Emery,  
Religious Education Chair

There is a lot going on in Religious Education. The monthly UU Cafés have been successful as both a fundraiser for Our Whole Lives (OWL) and as a monthly after-church luncheon social. We are close to our fundraising goal and look forward to the next UU Café on Sunday, Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> after church. UGCC will be offering OWL starting in January and has plans to eventually offer OWL to all children from kindergarten through the 12<sup>th</sup> grade.

We have more exciting events coming up in the near future. In addition to the weekly Hogwarts curriculum being offered, there is a Hunger Banquet to highlight world hunger and a Christmas pageant in the works. Ask our children about all the exciting things happening in RE.

A BIG THANK YOU TO ALL! Along with our teachers, each of our classes has an adult helper each Sunday. In addition to thanking our teachers and the adult spirit guides for all their hard work, there is one more person to thank. Beverly Boido has been recruiting and scheduling the spirit guides that help each Sunday. Thank you, Beverly, for taking on this job.

12/21/2008 - Instructor, TBA - Christmas Pageant, Winter Pageant

12/28/2008 - Instructor, Candy Wood - Herbology, Coloring with flower parts



## Christmas Choir

Calling all children who are singers! If your child would like to be in the Christmas choir, please let Paula Braxton know. Practice will start soon and will be held on Sundays.



## Our Whole Lives

Our Whole Lives will be starting in January 2009 for grades 5 and 6. If you would like your child to attend, please contact Paula Braxton for a registration form. There is a mandatory parent orientation that will be held on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> after church. This orientation must be attended by the parent(s) in order for the child to participate in Our Whole Lives. The facilitators for this class will be Candy Wood and Antonio Gonzalez. There is a \$15.00 cost for the book that the children will need for the class.



## Christmas Pageant

This year, the children will be performing "The Best Christmas Pageant Ever!" This is a play that has been adapted from a book. It's the story of the Herdman children and all of their antics. It will be a laughter-filled pageant and we hope that you come to see what the Herdmans are up to! The pageant will be held during the second service on Dec. 21. Practice for the pageant will happen during regular class time each Sunday. If you would like to help with set design, costumes, or anything else, please contact Paula Braxton.

## Last Harry Potter Book Club Meeting

Jan. 11 will be the last Accio UU's Harry Potter Book Club meeting. There will be a discussion of the seventh book and a celebration for completing the course! After the meeting, the UU Café will have a whole host of Harry Potter foods such as pumpkin pasties, shepherds pie, treacle tarts, and cauldron cakes. The last Harry Potter book club meeting, the UU Café and the OWL orientation are all on the same day! Food, fun and human sexuality! What else could a UU ask for?



## Happenings in RE

# *Helping Hands*



## **Another Successful Action Auction**

Our Action Auction which took place in November raised approximately \$6500 and a fine time was had by all! Many, many thanks to all who helped with this event. You are too numerous to name, but we must mention Merry Walle and Terry DeCrescenzo who organized the whole thing; Lucy Bunch, our incomparable auctioneer; our marvelous cook, Ken De Crescenzo; Dick Tarble who organized and ran the raffle; Susan Lange, Jim Eastman and Annette Emery, our setup and decorations group; and, of course, all who donated, bought items and pitched in to help!

*Thank You!*

## Share the Plate

UUCC's "Share the Plate" donation for October came to \$76.67 and has been sent to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Sacramento. By providing youth with a safe environment to participate in positive, fun activities, they fulfill their mission "to inspire and enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens."

~ Eric Walle, Treasurer

## Grow Our Spirit



"We are deeply grateful for your congregation's contributions in support of the Association's second annual Association Sunday. You are helping us Grow Our Spirit. We've received your congregation's check for \$77 on Wednesday, October 15, 2008, as well as other individual contributions. As of today, your congregation's contributions total \$787. Your participation on this celebratory day exemplifies your continued commitment to Unitarian Universalism, and proves that we are indeed better together".

[excerpt from 10/21/08 Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) letter]



## Daytimers Group

Daytimers is a discussion group that meets every Thursday from 10 AM - 12 noon. We are pleased to welcome people of all ages to join us for lively talk, good company, and lunch at a local restaurant afterwards. The current topic is "Varieties of Scientific Experience" by Carl Sagan. If interested, please get in touch with Dick Tarble.

## Saturday Supper

The Saturday Supper is a potluck dinner held on the first Saturday of each month. The next dinner will be on Saturday, December 6<sup>th</sup>. We divide up into small groups of 6-12 and share a meal in someone's home. At each dinner, we ask a question and take turns answering, if we choose. It's okay to participate without ever hosting and it is okay to come occasionally. Participants are with a different group of people each month. This is a great way to get to know others in our congregation. We would love to have you join us! Thank you to our hosts for Oc-

tober: Annette Emery and Patrick Cody. Please get in touch with Terri Riley if you can host or are interested in coming to our December potluck dinner.

## Theatre Group

On Friday, Dec. 12 at 8 PM, the group will see "Snow White: A British Panto" at City Theatre, Sacramento City College Art Court Theatre near Freeport and 12th Ave. Our member, Doug Lawson, a faculty member of the city college theatre department, will play a role in this new adaptation of the classic tale. Reservations (\$10 & \$15) to Frieda Fergus by Sunday, Dec. 7.

## Women's Group

I have received some responses from women interested in starting up the UUCC Women's Group at a new date and time. I will compile a summary of responses so that we can decide where and when to meet along with the purpose of the group. If you are interested in joining this group, contact me, Annette Emery.

~ Annette Emery, UUCC Women's Group Coordinator

## Men's Group

The UUCC Men's Group meets monthly for breakfast and conversation. The next meeting will be held on Saturday, December 13 at 9:00 AM at the church. We want to get some new blood into the group and encourage all interested men to attend. If you would like to join the group, please contact Patrick Cody.

## Special Events

### Guest at Your Table

Guest at Your Table boxes are again being distributed. Each person or family is asked to keep the box on their table as an extra guest and put money equivalent to the cost of the meal in the box.

The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) annually sponsors this fundraiser in support of its mission to advance human rights and social justice throughout the world by partnering with groups that promote these principles. Their work includes rehabilitation work in the areas affected by hurricane Katrina, and in the refugee camps in Darfur and Kenya.

Last year, we collected \$768. This year, we will collect the boxes at the Christmas Eve services. If you write a check rather than submit a cash donation, please make the check payable to "UUSC Guest at Your Table".

Thanks for your participation,  
Dick Tarble, UUSC Coordinator

### Christmas Is Coming!

Don't miss our special Holiday Intergenerational Service on Dec. 21 at 11 AM. It promises to be great fun! We will also have two Christmas Eve services again this year on Dec. 24 at 7:15 PM & 9:00 PM. (See "A Month of Sundays" on page 1 for details.) Plan to stay late or come early, as the case may be, so that we can all gather together to enjoy holiday cheer. There will be refreshments and conversation and much wishing each other "Merry Christmas" between the two ser-

vices from 8:15 PM to 9:00 PM. Come and bring holiday goodies to share!

## Other Items of Interest

### Old Friends in New Places

Two members who recently moved out of state, Mark Callicotte and Christy Clark, would like to share their new address with any UUCCers who want to keep in touch. You can find it in the Nov. 20 UUCC Weekly Bulletin or contact the church office.

### Remembering Viola Liuzzo and James Reeb

When Martin Luther King summoned clergy to Selma, AL in March 1968, UUs responded en masse. Two met their deaths there. Viola Liuzzo, a UU from Detroit, was killed by Klansmen as she was driving with a young black man on her way to Montgomery. The Rev. James Reeb, along with two other UU ministers, was attacked and beaten on a sidewalk in Selma. James Reeb died of his injuries. In memory of these two civil rights martyrs and in celebration of the progress that they helped bring about, the UUA sent bouquets of yellow roses to their two families on the day following the election of this country's first African American president. Viola Liuzzo's daughter Sally wrote in her note of thanks, "I cannot begin to explain the sense of pride I have right now for my mother and

all the civil rights activists of that time. I feel like everything they have fought for, has now been realized. Black children will no longer feel like they are 'less than' and they will now know....they can be ANYTHING they set their minds out to be."

### SSIP Needs UUCC Rep

If you are free from 12 noon to 1 PM on the second Wednesday of every month, we need you! South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership (SSIP) is a group of churches whose main activity is maintaining a Food Closet for the hungry and those needing a little help making it to the next paycheck. UUCC is among the churches that support SSIP with a contribution of \$4 per member. This entitles us to two places on the SSIP Board. Gina Guarneri has generously filled this position for some time and can no longer do so. This is an easy way to help keep UUCC involved and visible in the interfaith community and to assist those in need. If interested, please contact Gina or Rev. Martha. Thank you!

### Did You Know?

A recent UUA survey on UU church employees' compensation reconfirmed that the majority of UU congregations are "small" (i.e. less than 150 members). Of the 284 churches responding to the survey, 114, or 40%, were in this category. "Small mid-sized" churches (150-249 members) made up 18%; "middle mid-sized" churches were 17%; large mid-sized (350-499 members) were 9%; and churches over 500 members strong made up 9%. (Percentages have been rounded off.)

# About Us

## Mission

The ministry of the Unitarian Universalist Community Church is to foster open minds, caring hearts, helping hands, and growing spirits in a congregation of all ages. By living and sharing Unitarian Universalist values, our spiritual and intentionally diverse community seeks to bring compassion and justice to the world.

UUC is a member of the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) and the Pacific Central District (PCD) of the UUA.

## Membership

Would you like to be a formal member of this congregation? We would love to have you as a member!

If you would like membership information or if you feel ready to sign our membership book, you may talk to Rev. Martha Hodges or Laura Osborne.

Membership requirements are:

- 1) you must be at least 16 years old
- 2) you accept our principles and purposes
- 3) you make and fulfill a commitment to an annual contribution of record through a pledge of money and/or services.

We are a wonderful congregation and we will welcome you with open arms.

## Affiliates

All Unitarian Universalist affiliates in California's mountain and valley areas:

[www.uuvalleysierra.org](http://www.uuvalleysierra.org)

Pacific Central District (PCD):

[www.pcd-uua.org](http://www.pcd-uua.org)

Telephone: (510) 601-1437

Unitarian Universalist Association:

[www.uua.org](http://www.uua.org)

Telephone: (617) 742-2100

UU Legislative Ministry:

[www.uulmca.org](http://www.uulmca.org)

Telephone: (916) 441-0018

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee:

[www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org)

Telephone: (617) 868-7102

Sacyouth - Faith-Based Activities for Youth:

[www.sacyouth.com](http://www.sacyouth.com)

South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership (SSIP)

Emergency Food Closet:

[www.ssipfoodcloset.org](http://www.ssipfoodcloset.org)

Telephone: (916) 428-5290

## Contact

### Newsletter

U2C2 Connection Editor:

Newsletter contributions should be mailed to the UUC church address, phoned in to 689-2008, faxed to 689-2282 or emailed to [uucc@cwnet.com](mailto:uucc@cwnet.com) by the 15th of each month.

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Nancy Flagg 689-2008

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Editorial Advisor - website:

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### Administration

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### Leadership

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Rev. Martha Hodges, 689-2073

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Director of Religious Education:

Paula Braxton 689-2008 [uucc@cwnet.com](mailto:uucc@cwnet.com)

Board of Trustees:

*President:* Marion Randall

*Vice President:* John Sugar

*Secretary:* Richard Leimbach

*Treasurer:* Eric Walle

*At-Large Members:* Wynne Skow,

Richard Leimbach, Sonia Duffoo

*Endowment Trust:* Terri Riley,

Terry Chekon, Patrick Cody

Committees:

*Church Operations:* Alison Navas

*Committee on Ministry:* Tom Rintoul,

Celia Buckley, Jim Eastman

*Finance:* John Sugar

*Membership:* Rev. Martha Hodges

*Religious Education:* Annette Emery

*Stewardship:* Celia Buckley

*Worship:* Jim Skow

*Justice Coordinating Team:* Julia Walle,

Antonio Gonzalez

Openers/Closers Supervisor:

Rev. Martha Hodges



## The Principles and Sources of the Unitarian Universalist Association

We, the member congregations of the Unitarian Universalist Association, covenant to affirm and promote:

- The inherent worth and dignity of every person;
- Justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- Acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- A free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all;
- Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.



**UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
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Sacramento, CA 95828

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